

2006 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill

The \$1.6 Billion Hole In Domestic Priorities

The FY 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Bill faces a hole of roughly \$1.6 billion.

The Easy Mistake: Assuming from the subcommittee allocation the funding for Labor, Health and Human Services and Education will only be cut by \$164 Million.

What You'd Be Missing: These numbers do not account for two large new costs the bill will have to bear.

COST 1 **The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit:** In 2005, **\$1.048 billion** in start up costs for the Medicare prescription drug benefit were paid for by special one-time mandatory funding. In 2006 those costs move to regular discretionary appropriations in the Labor-HHS-Education bill.

COST 2 **LIHEAP:** Last year the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program received an emergency designation of almost **\$300 million**, causing that amount not to be counted in the bill total. However, while the needs for LIHEAP really haven't changed, there is no similar emergency designation in the FY 2006 bill.

The Result: When you add in new costs for the Medicare prescription drug benefit and LIHEAP, looking only at funding for current programs the Labor-HHS Subcommittee bill provides \$142.885 billion in FY 2006, compared to \$144.508 billion in FY 2005 – **a reduction of \$1.623 billion.**

